

FATALITY



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS III CORPS AND FORT HOOD
FORT HOOD, TEXAS 76544-5056



AFZF-GA-SAFE

15 November 2002

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: III Corps Experiences Its Second POV Fatality for FY03 -- Fatality Memo 03-02

1. Early this morning, III Corps experienced another POV fatality early this morning when a Fort Hood soldier lost his life in a terrible automobile rollover accident. The red flashing lights have returned to Fort Hood to remind us that another soldier's life has been snuffed out -- forever. Initial information from the state police indicates that the soldier was recklessly operating the POV on the interstate in excess of 100 mph when he lost control and rolled the vehicle four times. Alcohol is suspected. I also suspect fatigue is involved because the accident occurred in the early morning hours, around 0300. The passenger, also a III Corps soldier, luckily survived. Both soldiers were on a unit three day pass prior to the unit's deployment to the NTC.

2. This morning's POV fatality is already our second one for FY03 -- making this an ominous start for what we hoped would be a markedly safer year than last year. It still can be! This needless loss of a soldier in a preventable accident is a painfully familiar POV scenario for us in III Corps. In the 17 POV fatality cases in FY02 and now in the two for FY03, the common factors of reckless driving, speed, alcohol, and fatigue were involved too often. Additionally and as in this case, soldiers were usually off duty either over a weekend or on a unit holiday.

3. We are approaching the holiday season. As I mentioned on in my 11 November email to commanders, we have a superb Holiday Safety Campaign Plan and your supporting plans are solid. We need to execute these plans to standard. Again, experience tells us that engaged battalion commanders and CSMs, empowering first line leaders, can make the difference in putting a halt to POV deaths. Have your leaders discuss with their soldiers the lessons learned from our latest POV fatality. Challenge your first-line leaders to initiate innovative ideas/programs designed to reach their soldiers with safety messages that modify unsafe/reckless behavior. Only when our soldiers subscribe to the safety standards will we not lose any more of them in reckless and needless accidents.

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B. B. BELL
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

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